

But I also come to commend the rescue workers who worked tirelessly, sometimes around the clock, in a rescue attempt to reduce the pain and suffering and to bring out of the rubble the loved ones in Oklahoma City. I want to take a moment to specifically commend a group of rescue workers from my own district in Montgomery County who went down to Oklahoma, as did many other rescue workers from around the country, to lend a hand. In the truest American spirit they did a wonderful job, and I want to thank them one and all.

I also want to join with what I believe is a rising chorus speaking on behalf of Federal workers.

Now I know this is a somewhat sensitive issue, and let me be clear that I am not here to suggest that conservative speech, antigovernment speech, disagreement with Government policy or disagreement with Government bureaucracy was the cause of the bombing in Oklahoma City. That is not my argument. But I rather hope that, if there is any legacy to the people who lost their lives in Oklahoma City, it will be a legacy of respect for Federal employees.

I say to my colleagues, "If you go down the rollcall, you see the employees from all agencies, from Housing and Urban Development, from the Department of Transportation, from Veterans Affairs, from Social Security, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, from General Services Administration which were all in that building. These are some of the same Federal employees who have been showered with contempt, who have been described as the worst, as Government vultures, as lazy bureaucrats, as worthless Federal employees. These are the same Federal employees whom we have attempted to cut benefits for, the same Federal employees whom we have increased pensions costs on, at least attempted to increase pension costs on, and it seems to me there is a general attitude of hostility toward Federal employees."

Legitimate criticism, of course, is intrinsic to this body; contempt for hard-working Federal employees is not. I would certainly caution my colleagues of both sides of the aisle who may have occasion to be contemptuous of Federal employees and their performance to keep in mind that they do not make the laws. We do. They only try to execute to the best of their ability the laws that we make, and, yes, some do not do as good a job as we would like, and some merit criticism, but certainly the kind of contempt and condemnation that I have heard on the floor of this body is not deserving. These people, as we now know, have families, and young children, and dreams and desires, many of which were snuffed out in Oklahoma City. They are people just like us. Now is not a time for finger pointing. Now is the time for sympathy, for condolences, for words of encouragement.

But I hope there will be a legacy out of all this, a legacy of tolerance for Federal employees, support for Federal employees, a legacy of restraint on the part of Members of this House and on the part of certain Members of the media when addressing the issue of Federal employees because, while these words did not cause the bombing in Oklahoma City, they certainly showed a contempt for Federal employees which they do not deserve. Let us leave the victims of Oklahoma City with a better legacy in the future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] is recognized for 60 minutes.

[Mr. PORTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

NORTHEASTERN OHIO PLEASED WITH THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, we are here after the first 100 days have been completed, and I think most of us have had the experience of going back to our respective districts, and being involved in a number of engagements, and town hall meetings, and the kinds of things that we do in order to try and find out exactly what our constituents are saying about how they feel about what has been done, and I want to report to the Congress that I have had extraordinarily positive feedback from the people of northeastern Ohio regarding what we have called the Contract With America and regarding the direction that they believe that this contract or that this Congress is now taking our highest legislative body in the United States, the direction we are going and the direction we are trying to pursue for the people of America.

And what I hear from my constituents is that they could not be happier, they could not be more pleased, that they finally feel that they have in the Congress of the United States men and women who are willing to actually commit to what they said that they would do, that this whole notion of keeping a promise regardless of what the promise happens to be, even the fact of making a promise and keeping it as a group of elected officials elevates that group of elected officials from politicians who, as Winston Churchill observed, are defined by being concerned about the next election to a level of being statesmen; that is, people who are concerned about the next generation, and I cannot tell you how much positive feedback I have gotten from the men and women of northeastern Ohio, the west side of Cleveland and western Cuyahoga County regarding the efforts we have made and the efforts to make Government small-

er, to make it more responsible, to reduce taxes, to reduce the burden of Government on the people, and to try and bring that burden of Government to its closest and its most local area. That is the local communities.

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If you think back to George Washington's time, what was it that George Washington believed in with respect to the House of Representatives? He thought of districts not in the sense that we think of today, where we have 572,000 people in each district on average, at least in the State of Ohio. It varies a little bit from State to State. But he thought of districts as neighborhoods, that neighborhoods were in fact the building block of the House of Representatives.

Well, that is when we had a fraction of the number of people living in this country that we have today. But it was a remarkable thing that he would observe that we should be as neighbors and act that way.

Well, that is how we should act in the House of Representatives, and we have a tremendous challenge coming before us in the next 3 or 4 months, and that is the challenge of delivering a budget to be voted upon by this House and then to be signed into law by the President of the United States.

The fact is that that is going to be a tough fight and a tough battle, because in making a budget, what we do, just as a family does, just as an institution does, just as a company does, our country will be redefining, or defining and redefining its values, because it is through the budget process that we truly do define what we believe in, what our priorities are, what is most important and what our values are as a Nation.

That is exactly what we will be doing. That is why the budget process is so important, not just because it spends money, not just because of the way it describes the appropriations bills, but in fact because what we do is we tell the American people, we tell ourselves, exactly what it is that we value as a people and what direction we are going to be going in.

I can tell you as a member of the Committee on the Budget, the direction we are going to be going in is we are going to, in fact, have a balanced budget after a 7-year period. We have committed to it; we have worked on it all last week. We were here when the rest of the House was still in recess; we came back early; and we will, in fact, deliver for the American people a balanced budget after a 7-year period.

It is tough sledding, it takes a tremendous amount of work, and it takes a tremendous amount of decision making in terms of making the tough choices and making the hard decisions. But that is what we have been working on, that is what we will continue to work on. We are going to Leesburg, VA, to a conference, and then we will

present through hearings and ultimately at the end of May for a vote in early June, a budget resolution which will show the American people just exactly how we can get to a balanced budget after 7 years.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ENSIGN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it's been nearly 2 weeks since a terrorist's bomb ripped a hole in the Murrah Federal Building and ripped a hole in the heart of the Nation. The images of bloodied children being carried from the rubble will stain our collective memory for a long time to come. How could it happen here, we asked.

Through media reports, we have come to know the children who were so brutally murdered—we know their names and faces—Baylee Almon, Colton and Chase Smith, Aaron and Elijah Coverdale and Ashley Eckles. They have become our children, too.

And, we have learned about other victims of the bombing, as well. We know that more than 500 people who were working in the Murrah Building on that awful day were federal employees. Many were killed. Federal employees were at the Social Security Administration, helping seniors in their retirement; they were there at the Housing and Urban Development Office, helping families find affordable housing; they were there at the BATF and the Secret Service helping to enforce our laws and protect our people.

To understand the scale of this tragedy, one need only to talk to employees at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which had approximately 90 workers in the building at the time of the attack and suffered the greatest loss of life. At last report, 32 HUD workers have been pronounced dead, two are hospitalized and another 3 are still missing.

To understand the scale of this tragedy, talk to employees at the U.S. Secret Service. All six of their employees assigned to Oklahoma City are now gone: Mickey Maroney, Alan Whicher, Kathy Seidl, Donald Leonard, Cynthia Brown and Linda McKinney. Together they leave behind 6 spouses, 6 parents and 11 children.

Too often, we in this Nation, and, in particular, in this body, have been guilty of forgetting who these people are—they are not nameless, faceless bureaucrats. They are husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and they are parents.

One of the 32 HUD employees who did not survive the Oklahoma blast was Lanny Scroggins. Lanny was a decorated Vietnam veteran who spent the last 23 years as a Federal employee, helping others. How is it that Lanny Scroggins could survive the jungles of Southeast Asia, but be taken by a ter-

rorist's bomb while at work in America's heartland? No one has the answer.

But, while Federal employees were the victims in Oklahoma City, they were also the heroes: Federal employees from FEMA pulled survivors from the wreckage and helped feed the hundreds of rescue workers.

Federal employees from the FBI, BATF and Secret Service launched a swift and sweeping investigation that brought the primary suspect into custody within hours of the explosion.

But Federal employees are heroes every day. Every day they work to take care of our seniors, to house our poor, to enforce our laws, to bring food, shelter and clothing to those stricken by natural disasters and manmade atrocities, like the one in Oklahoma City.

And, yet, for these heroes there are no Congressional Medals; no parades down Main Street; no statues in town square. Instead, these heroes too often are belittled as bureaucrats. In debate on this House floor, Federal employees have been the target of overblown political rhetoric, on both sides of the aisle.

We don't know what impact our words have on deranged individuals or the lunatic fringe groups we've read so much about over the past few weeks. We do not know. Wouldn't it be best to err on the side of caution? Let's not rely on others to do the right thing, let us do the right thing and leave nothing to chance.

Make no mistake, there are groups in this country who are waging a war against Federal law enforcement. For many of these fringe groups, law enforcement has become the enemy. They are not "jack-booted Government thugs," as the National Rifle Association asserts. And they deserve better than to have voices of hate on our airwaves advising listeners about "shooting them in the head."

We need to have congressional hearings in the wake of the Oklahoma bombing on the increasing threats against Federal employees. By doing so, we don't politicize a tragedy. Rather, we live up to our responsibilities to address this tragedy and make sure it doesn't happen again.

And, we also need to look at the words we use. All of us in this body want to cut the size of the Federal Government. But our goal in reducing the size of Government should be to make it work better for people. We should be able to make those arguments based on the facts, without demonizing Federal employees—without belittling their contributions.

The Federal employees who were killed in Oklahoma City dedicated their lives to serving us. Now we should serve their memory by standing up to the forces that seek to divide us with words of hate.

DISTRICT APPROVAL OF FIRST 100 DAYS OF 104TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LATHAM] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take the opportunity tonight to reflect a little bit as to what we heard back on recess. I personally, in my district in northwest Iowa, which is primarily agricultural, held 16 town meetings and attended four agricultural hearings. And, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you, the people in the Fifth Congressional District of Iowa are 100 percent behind what we did in the first 100 days in the new 104th Congress.

People told me to keep going, do not give up the fight, continue the ideas and the motivation behind the Contract With America. They were very, very pleased to hear what we did on the very first day as far as reforming this Congress itself, how we do business, cutting the number of people in committee staff, cutting the number of committees, limiting the terms of the chairs of the committees and subcommittees, limiting the term of the Speaker himself, and, most importantly, on the very first day when we passed the Shays-Grassley Act, it held Congress subject to the same laws that the rest of the country has to abide by.

Also, we received tremendous support at every meeting for the items in the contract itself, when you talk about the balanced budget amendment, the welfare reform, doing away with the outrageous regulations that we have had in the past few years, having the first vote forever in this body on term limits, something that people have tried for years and years and it was never allowed to happen before.

But, again, Mr. Speaker, the people in the Fifth District of Iowa told me to continue the fight. They believe that it is a refreshing wind blowing through Washington when you have a group of people who go to Washington and work very, very hard to make real change and reform, and, most importantly, to keep their word as to what they said during the campaign. It is a major change. People are responding. People do not believe the liberal pledge that they are getting from Washington. They know the facts.

I have another gentleman here, would you like to comment, the gentleman from Georgia?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I, too, have a district which is somewhat similar to the gentleman's. My district, which is in the very heart of the State of Georgia, stretches from the middle of the State all the way to the Florida line. I have three military installations in my district, two Air Force bases and a Marine Corps logistics base, and the balance of my district is made up primarily of agriculture and agribusiness industry as